

To whom it may concern:

Voice Your Vote is the non-partisan commission of the Michigan Student Assembly charged with several critical student voting related tasks, not least of which is registering the student body to vote. Every election year, we are on the front lines of student voter registration, asking students if they are registered, handing out literature with voter rights information, and answering questions about voting from our peers. Since our commissioning by Michigan's student government in 1996, each and every member of our organization has had an intimate understanding of student concerns regarding voter registration and voting, and more importantly, the barriers to student participation in the democratic process. Since its passage in 1999, there has been no question that Roger's Law is one of these barriers.

The uncertainty created by Roger's law is the single biggest problem generated by the legislation. Requiring the address on voters' identification card to match their voter registration card, Roger's law is particularly problematic for students who live on campus for only nine months out of the year, usually for just four years. The problem is two-fold. Students fear being challenged at the polls for not having the address on their state-issued id match their voter registration card. At the same time, however, there is a real fear that changing students' addresses will put their scholarships, parent dependency status, and state residency status into question. Of course students want to be participants in their country's civic process, but when faced with the fear of losing scholarships or insurance, voting regrettably takes a back seat. The only remaining options students have then are to drive home on Election Day or vote absentee. With a full day of classes on Election Tuesdays, the former option isn't viable and because many states require first-time voters (a status which most students hold) to vote in person, the latter option is also out of reach. Roger's Law puts an insurmountable burden on the student to be a voting member of our society.

In our opinion, it is a striking contradiction that, while politicians often condemn younger generations for being apathetic with respect to the political process, they create or preserve legislation that is responsible for preventing many students from exercising their democratic rights. For 13 years, Voice Your Vote has worked with countless numbers of students to help them express their opinions at the ballot box. There is no question that students want to be a part of this process; we want to have our voices heard. The passage of Roger's Law has unambiguously prevented this from happening. We urge its immediate repeal.

Please contact us for any further information. Thank you for your time.

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